

BOOK REVIEWS

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Essentials of Otolaryngology

Frank E. Lucente and Steven M. Sobol

Raven Press, New York, 1983.

380 pp. Price \$14.95.

Any text attempting to give an overview of the field of otolaryngology—head and neck surgery—runs the risk of being bland and irrelevant to a large population of readers. The authors of *Essentials of Otolaryngology* have avoided this by focusing on the needs of the non-otolaryngologist and especially the medical student. A symptom oriented approach organization and handy pocketbook size facilitate use as a clinical reference. In addition to a concise review of regional anatomy and physiology, the student is offered a clear description of the workup and technique of examination of the otolaryngology patient.

The diversity of symptoms discussed includes hearing loss, dizziness, hoarseness, hemoptysis, and others. For each symptom the pertinent history and physical findings are presented and a differential diagnosis developed. Comments on treatment are generally limited to principles. In a deviation from this format is a chapter on tonsillectomy and adenoidectomy, which is a subject of continuing controversy. There is also a provocative section on the psychological aspects of otolaryngologic disorders.

This is a nonpretentious work, tightly organized and written in a straightforward and lucid manner. Essentially all of the tables and summary outlines are credited to other authors. The few original line drawings are simple and uncluttered. A cogent but perhaps too limited number of references are cited throughout the text.

Essentials of Otolaryngology is certainly not an exhaustive study of otolaryngology, symptomatology, or even "essentials." As a handy and usable guide to the primary care health care provider and especially for the medical student, it is right on target. This success may in part be due to the appropriate soliciting of input and criticism from students during preparation of the manuscript.

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Psychophysical Judgment and the Process of Perception

H-G. Geissler and P. Petzold, Eds.

H. F. J. M. Buffart and Yu. M. Zbrodin, Co-Eds.

North Holland, Amsterdam, 1982.

288 pp. Price \$62.75.

This collection of articles is based on selected papers presented at the XXIst International Congress of Psychology, held in Leipzig, 1980. As the editors write, the book is not intended to present a systematic coverage

of any particular topic, but rather "to give the reader a vivid picture of [the] events as they actually took place in Leipzig" (p. 9). The book does indeed succeed in conveying a sense of the varied concerns and approaches of the contributors, more than half of whom are from Eastern Europe.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I, "Foundations of Perceived Quantity," consists of two sections. The first, on "Psychophysical Scaling," contains articles by Parducci (USA), Stevens (USA), Borg (Sweden), Moyer *et al.* (USA), Nikova (Bulgaria), and Ismaylov (USSR). The second section, on "Visual Perception of Object Properties: Peripheral and Central Determinants," contains articles by Yakimov *et al.* (Bulgaria), Gupta (India), Kawaguchi (Japan), Tayal (India), Buffart (The Netherlands), Mitsuboshi *et al.* (Japan), Van Tuijl and Leeuwenberg (The Netherlands), Hamada (Japan), Kämpf and Velichkovsky (East Germany), and Buffart and Leeuwenberg (The Netherlands).

Part II, entitled "Foundations of Categorization and Decision," also consists of two sections. The first, on "Discrimination and Detection" contains articles by Eisler (Sweden), Owen (USA), Valter (Czechoslovakia), Hoppe (East Germany), Indlin (USSR), Bartosiewicz and Falkowski (Poland), Frishman (USSR), Bardin *et al.* (USSR), Zabrodin (USSR), Korsh and Sadov (USSR), Matveeva (USSR), and Oshima (Japan). The second section, on "Unidimensional Categorization and Pattern Recognition," contains articles by Petzold (East Germany), Haubensak (East Germany), Getty and Swets (USA), Hacker (East Germany), Quaas (East Germany), Geissler *et al.* (East Germany), and Lebedev (USSR).

As might be expected of a compendium of this nature, the contributions vary substantially in quality. The article by Getty and Swets is outstanding. The authors argue that perception of a complex visual stimulus may be represented as a point in a multidimensional Euclidean space, and that the relative distances among stimuli in that space determine performance in various judgmental tasks. This argument is supported by an elegant series of experiments. Other excellent contributions are provided by the Dutch group.

The paper by Zabrodin, entitled "On some methodological problems of psychophysical research in the USSR" provides the Western reader with valuable insights into the Soviet approach to psychophysics. As the author states, this approach stems in general from "the principles of materialist dialectics" (p. 203). Several principles which specifically govern the theoretical orientation of Soviet psychophysics are enunciated, the first of which is termed "Unity and struggle of the opposites" (p. 204). Zabrodin explicates this principle as follows: "It is assumed to be fundamental that static and dynamic features, deterministic and probabilistic aspects of mental activity must be studied as integral parts of one and the same entity, i.e., in their unity and complementarity" (p. 204).

In general, the present reviewer doubts whether the overall scientific merit of this collection is such as to justify the substantial cost of its purchase on an individual basis. However, those who wish to inform themselves concerning approaches to perception and psychophysics taken by scientists outside the U.S., might wish to request copies from their libraries.

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